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County, plant agree to plan for pollutants

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Wayne County's worst known source of toxic air pollutants will be cleaned up under a settlement reached by the county and Environmental Waste Control of Inkster, air pollution officials said Tuesday.

The agreement will drastically limit emissions of three potentially cancer-causing compounds — benzene, chloroform and trichloroethene — from the plant, which recycles waste oil and treats hazardous waste.

Under the consent agreement, approved Monday by Wayne County Circuit Judge Lucille Watts, the company is to finish replacing two open lagoons with four closed steel storage tanks, and install odor abatement equipment and controls.

The company also must pay \$5,000 to the county and the state Department of Natural Resources to cover the cost of monitoring and enforcement related to the case.

Neighbors have blamed emissions from the plant, at 27140 Princeton, for runny eyes, nosebleeds and nausea. They said the odors were so bad at times that residents had to stay in their homes with windows shut, even in summer. The county received more than 100 complaints from area residents about the company in 1987.

The company already is in the process of installing odor abatement equipment costing an estimated \$350,000, under a consent order reached with the county Air Pollution Control Division in August.

In September, county officials reviewing monitoring data submitted by the company to the DNR discovered the emissions of the three known or suspected carcinogens. In November, the county filed a lawsuit asking that the plant be shut down. The facility has continued to operate during the negotiations.

David Zacks, attorney for the company, said he did not know how much the new equipment would cost, but said that "the company is committed to spend whatever amount necessary to comply with the judgment."

Howard Murray, a spokesman for the county Air Pollution Control Division, said the company has until May 31 to finish removing the two lagoons, and must submit plans and permit applications for the rest of the work by May 15.